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AGRICULTURE FOR FAS - ELIZABETH JONES
PASS USTR FOR D.VETTER
STATE FOR EUR/ERA AND EUR/AGS - SAINT-ANDRE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EU](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AUSTRIA TO VOTE "NO" ON BIOTECH SUGAR BEET AND
STACKED BIOTECH CORN VARIETIES

REF: STATE 50150

11. Ambassador and AgCouns presented reftel demarche in the course of a general meeting with Austrian Agriculture Minister Josef Proell on April 19. (Full report septel.)

12. Proell indicated that Austria would vote "no" at the EU Standing Committee on the European Commission's proposal to approve two biotech corn varieties and one biotech sugar beet variety. He said the main reason for Austria's opposition is the lack of EU coexistence standards. He said specifically that Austria's opposition to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) is "not a food safety or food security issue." The Minister added that many new EU member states are presing for greater biotech plantings, and want the EU to expand biotech usage. Proell said consumers should have the "right to choose" GM or non-GM products.
KILNER